

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 05099 061059Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 PPT-01 CPR-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 SY-05 OPR-02 PC-01 AID-05 /037 W

----- 096470

R 060944Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY BIRUT

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7837

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA US IS

SUBJ: TRAVEL OF AMERICAN CITIZENS: ALLENBY BRIDGE

REF: JERUSALEM 1137; AMMAN 4807

1. STRESSING WE WERE NOT RAISING MATTER OFFICIALLY
EMBOFF JULY 31 ASKED APPROPRIATE WORKING-LEVEL
MFA OFFICIAL (ARIEL) IF HE WAS AWARE THAT THERE
HAD BEEN AN INCREASE RECENTLY IN COMPLAINTS FROM
AMERICAN CITIZENS ABOUT THEIR TREATMENT ON ISRAELI-
CONTROLLED SIDE OF ALLENBY BRIDGE.

2. ARIEL SAID HE WAS GLAD TO HAVE THIS BROUGHT TO
HIS ATTENTION, SINCE THE MFA WAS CONSTANTLY
MONITORING PROCEDURES AT THE BRIDGE. HE CITED TWO
POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR FACT THAT INCIDENTS HAVE
COME TO OUR ATTENTION. SOME OFFICIALS AT BRIDGE
WORK UNDER THE BELIEF THAT IF WORD GETS AROUND THAT
SEARCHES ARE THOROUGH AND TIME-CONSUMING THIS MAY
ACT AS DETERRENT TO POTENTIAL TROUBLE-MAKERS.
MOREOVER, DURING SUMMER MONTHS THERE IS CONFLUENCE
OF FACTORS (INTENSE HEAT, INCREASED VOLUME OF TRAVELERS,
IDF RESERVISTS SUBSTITUTING FOR EXPERIENCED

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 05099 061059Z

OFFICIALS) WHICH INCREASES POTENTIAL FOR COMPLAINTS

EVERY YEAR.

3. IN ANY CASE, ARIEL SAID, MFA IS CONCERNED THAT ANY TRAVELER SHOULD RECEIVE EITHER FIRST OR LAST IMPRESSION OF ISRAEL FROM UNSATISFACTORY BRIDGE-CROSSING EXPERIENCE. THIS CONCERN IS INCREASED WHEN TRAVELER IS AMERICAN CITIZEN. HE ASKED THAT HE BE INFORMED IN FUTURE ON PERSONAL BASIS WHEN VALID COMPLAINTS ARE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF OUR NEIGHBORING POSTS. HE UNDERSTOOD WHY WE MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE DETAILS IN THE ABSENCE OF FORMAL DEPOSITION, BUT SAID THAT KNOWING AT LEAST DATE AND TIME OF CROSSING WOULD HELP HIM MAKE NECESSARY REJOINDERS TO APPROPRIATE PEOPLE.

4. COMMENT: IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO BRING TO MFA ATTENTION DATE AND TIME OF CROSSINGS BY AMERICAN CITIZENS IN WHICH COMPLAINT SEEMS JUSTIFIED. OUR PURPOSE, HOWEVER WILL NOT BE TO MAINTAIN SCOREBOARD OF GRIEVANCES, BUT ONLY TO SUPPLY MFA WITH AMMUNITION IN ITS EFFORT TO MINIMIZE PROBLEM. TOON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TELAV05099
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750271-0315
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750876/aaaacoxd.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 JERUSALEM 1137, 75 AMMAN 4807
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 AUG 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <28 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRAVEL OF AMERICAN CITIZENS: ALLENBY BRIDGE
TAGS: OTRA, US, IS
To: AMMAN BEIRUT
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006